

THE *Final Straw*

A WEEKLY ANARCHIST SHOW

The Final Straw is a weekly anarchist and anti-authoritarian radio show bringing you voices and ideas from struggle around the world.

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Voices In Struggle: Remembering Tortuguita + Resistance in Lützerath & Against Tren Maya

The Final Straw Radio Jan 22, 2023



they started the construction, but they want to finish the project by the end of 2023. And so they are getting nervous and trying to speed up the process, and the problem is that they are building everywhere a little bit. They are starting to destroy the rainforest and build stations but sometimes they stop and go on to another construction site or they have to change where the train goes because there are protests. Sometimes they also notice that you can't build above big caves situated in the rain forest. So, if they also changing the route permanently, which means it's not certain that this project will really be over and that the train will arrive by the end of this year, but all the destruction of nature is still happening and all the militarization goes on. All the problems of the project – the violation of the rights of indigenous people, the destruction of nature, the militarization, the fight against migrants – all this is happening right now in the name of this project, whether or not it will be ready by the end of this year. So, we don't know if Tren Maya becomes a reality, but the damages are already a reality.

F-A: I would really to promote the reports of Recherche-AG because it's quite a complex story with multiple layers that are not possible to cover in a short interview. Where can people find it and in which languages is it available?

P: You can find our research online. Search for “Tren Maya Made in Germany”. We have it on two different websites, the website of the YaBasta network from Germany, and the website called DeineBahn. The report is available in German, Spanish, and English for now.

F-A: Thank you so much for finding time to talk. Wish you a lot of strength, and a lot of strength to people who are on fighting on the site.

P: Thank you very much.

First up, we caught up with Eric Champaign of Tallahassee, FL, about his friend Manny, aka Tortugueta or little turtle. Manuel Teran was shot and killed by law enforcement during an early morning raid of the forest encampment to defend the Welaunee aka Atlanta Forest and to stop CopCity on Wednesday, January 18th, 2023. Law enforcement claimed in the media that they responded to shots fired and the wounding of an officer by killing the shooter, but at the time of this release the Georgia Bureau of Investigation has not yet produced a weapon or bodycam footage of the clash. *[Update, Georgia Bureau of Investigation claims they found Tort's gun and ballistics match the bullet in the pelvis of the cop]* The killing of Tortugueta has sparked outrage, calls for independent investigations, vigils and calls for renewed and dispersed activity. Word is that another 6 people were arrested and charged with domestic terrorism during the raid. Check out our chat with a member of Atlanta Anti-Repression Committee for some context and links to group fighting back in the courts. There's a fundraiser for Tortugueta's family at GoFundMe: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/for-family-of-manuel-tortugueta-paez-teran>

Eric also speaks about his friend, Dan Baker, who is nearing his release date. You can hear our past chat with Eric about Dan's case at our website alongside links about the case and how to support him. There's now a paypal for donations for Dan's post-

Paypal email: DanielBakerDonations@gmail.com
Instagram: [@FreeDanBaker](https://www.instagram.com/FreeDanBaker)

This second segment is a recording by A-Radio Berlin of a conversation with a radio activist from Aalpunk from Lützerath giving some context of the struggle there in the west of Germany. Since this recording, the encampments have been evicted but resistance continues against the ginormous lignite mine that the corporation RWE is attempting to expand there. You can also hear or read our September 25th, 2022 episode for some background. More info at <https://luetzerathlebt.info/en>

Finally, we're sharing a segment by Frequenz-A about Proyecto Tren Maya in the Yucatán peninsula of so-called Mexico. The conversation with a member of Recherche-Ag about a report they published in Solidarity with the Zapatista movement, on the German state and corporate participation in this mega-project and the dangers posed by the Maya Train, which includes huge expansion of electric, travel and other corporate and state infrastructure through sensitive ecosystems and sovereign indigenous lands, being overseen by the Mexican military. You can find this report and more at ya-basta-netz.org.

Search for this interview title at <https://thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org/> to find links to further resources on this topic, featured music, the audio version, and files for printing copies of this episode.

Remembering Tortuguita

TFSR: Could you please introduce yourself however you see fit with whatever names, preferred gender pronouns, location, or other information that'd be useful for the audience?

Eric: Sure. My name is Eric, he/they. I'm an artist in Tallahassee. I've been doing some farming and been involved with a lot of mutual aid work out here. That's part of how I met Manny.

TFSR: We're talking about Manuel Teran, aka Tortuguita, who was killed by a state trooper outside of Atlanta during a raid the other morning while folks were camping in defense of the forest there. I wonder if you could tell listeners a little bit about how you met and knew Manny in Florida?

E: This is a whole other story that we can maybe expand on a little bit later. But I moved to Tallahassee with my friend, Daniel Baker, in 2020. Shortly after we moved here, the J6 riots were happening. They're threatening to occupy all the state capitals to try to orchestrate some coup attempt. He was very concerned about this. He was trying to rally up people to try to be there, to try to prevent that from happening or at least try to extract people who could have been injured from this occupation. Federal agents raided our apartment and arrested him. And I was embroiled in all this prison solidarity work for Daniel.

I was going through a lot, I was still trying to keep connected with the projects that we had already begun. Over the course of doing that, I used to volunteer regularly at a DIY art space called The Plant in Tallahassee, and Manny was another volunteer there. So we met through that and became friends. And before long, we were pretty much doing everything together. They were a pillar of support for me while I was trying to process Dan's whole situation, and they even attended one of Dan's hearings out here. They were one of the only friends in town who showed up for the trial and wrote Dan some letters. It was really helping me get through it and get the support that I needed to stay sane at that point.

TFSR: All of us here are very sorry for your loss.

E: I just went off this fucking ride.

siste!" (the South Resists). The idea is to connect the different resistance groups in the area and to give visibility to the issues related to the project. You can support this, for example, by action here in Europe or wherever you are. There are a lot of international companies in this Tren Maya project, they are companies from Germany, the United States, China, Spain, France. It would be possible to do action against these companies while the Caravana is happening. You can also help by giving publicity to it, if you have some connection to the press. Financial support is indeed needed. When you look at the statement by the Congreso Nacional Indígena, you will find donation options, which would help a lot. And there's also the possibility to join the Caravana. If you read the statements, you can inform yourself about the plans. And there's an email address that you can contact and apply for or ask for help.

F-A: As far as I know, you're focusing on the work of Deutsche Bahn. Do you want to mention the most important critical points on the Deutsche Bahn or other companies that are important to have in mind?

P: The participation of Deutsche Bahn, which is the railway company here in Germany, is important because they present themselves as protecting the climate and the environment. They are a train company, but it is much more than that. They are active in the whole world, for example, they are transporting weapons globally. They are also part of the Tren Maya project, consulting the government and other companies within the project. There are also a lot of other companies like the Deutsche Bahn from other countries in Europe, which are part of Tren Maya. For example, Ineco and Renfe from Spain or Alstom/Bombardier from France. As I said, we want to present these companies as the evil companies they really are and do something against that presentation as a green solution, a climate-protecting company, because they are not.

And another important player here in Germany is the weapons industry because [Tren Maya] is a project promoted by the Mexican military. And it's also a project, which wants to bring much more military into this area to act against the migrants and Zapatistas who fought for autonomy in these areas. A lot of the weapons this army uses come from Germany, too. So we are also doing actions against these companies and protesting their participation in this destruction. It is the destruction of a whole region and entering it in a colonial way. It's a new form of colonialism in this area.

F-A: As far as I remember, this destruction-construction is going on since 2020 and they try to speed it up and finish it as fast as possible. How much of it is already done? How much destruction is already there?

P: That's also the problem of this project because it is really uncertain that they will finish their goals of the project by 2023. The project started in 2018. In 2020,

indigenous communities or changing the way of life because they are living from small agriculture in small communities. And now, they will have to work in factories or hotels for tourists.

Moreover, it is a project of militarization. We could call it Tren Militar, and not Tren Maya because it is a project which is under the control of the Mexican military. And the Mexican military is also getting the profits out of this project, as well as big international companies who are working on the project. The role of the military is also important because of the migration in the area. The south of Mexico is the most important area for migration from Central America and the Caribbean toward the United States of America. And so the whole project and the militarization it brings is also part of the fight against immigration and the fight against migrants in this area, which is why also, for example, the government of the United States is supporting this mega project. Another big point is the destruction of the environment, because the project not only threatens the rainforest, but also big cave systems. It also threatens the water in the area and the mangroves on the coast. So it is really a project which has nothing to do with a small project for tourism, but it's changing the whole area. And it's a mode of colonialism because big companies siding with the military are entering these territories of indigenous people in the area.

Frequenz-A: How does the situation on the spot look like? What is the resistance to or support of the project? What repressions do activists on the site face?

P: It is difficult to describe it because the whole project is in a big area in different regions. The situation is different from region to region. But generally, we can say that in the whole of Mexico, there's also a lot of support for this project and for the new Mexican government, which considered itself a left government, but in reality, it is promoting the neoliberal policy. There is resistance, mainly from the indigenous communities, for example, from the Congreso Nacional Indígena. They are resisting in the streets or at the construction site, but also using legal means. A lot of laws have been violated by the Mexican government, for example, the law of consulting the indigenous communities. Theoretically, you have to ask the communities before entering the territory, but this hasn't happened. But right now, the Mexican government declared it a project of national security to ignore their own laws, which shows the importance of the grassroots connection between the communities to resist the project on the spot. This begins now with the Caravana against Tren Maya project, which will take place in April-May this year.

F-A: What is Caravana? What will it look like, can people join it? Is any support needed?

P: You can read the comunicados, statements of Congreso Nacional Indígena, who called for this Caravana. Search for the Comunicado por la Caravana "El Sur Re-

TFSR: Can you tell listeners a little bit about what you know about Manuel's or Tortugito's backstory, some stuff that fleshes them out? Because a lot of people are probably seeing a picture of them. I saw Unicorn Riot did an interview with a couple of friends in Atlanta, which is great. But it'd be cool to hear a little bit more about your impression of them, and what you know about their background.

E: They were a very international personality. They'd grown up partly in Venezuela, partly in Texas. They had lived in the US on and off. They'd lived in Egypt for a while. They lived in Japan for a bit. They were quite the globetrotter. I know they had done some environmental work at FSU-Panama. They were very committed to their studies. And at least at first, out at Florida State University at Panama, they had started doing a pre-med program. But they were intimidated by the prospect of all the trauma that comes with that profession. So they transferred more into the psychology department to study neurobiology. The main point of interest that they were focused on was the use of psychedelics for therapy. They had an Ayahuasca experience at one point that blew their mind about the possibilities of therapy through the use of these types of substances.

TFSR: Can you give your impressions of Tortuguita's participation in forest defense and organizing around Cop City? What got them involved or inspired them?

E: A combination of things. On the one hand, especially trying to study that therapy, there are so many different legal barriers and the way the carceral system works. I feel they're very aware of how the carceral system prevents people from getting these types of treatments that could be available and very beneficial to people. Also, going to Dan's trial, I think, flipped a switch with Manny because they were very struck by the injustice of the trial and how Dan was being treated. I remember them telling me that they had cried about it not long after, and I could tell it affected them very strongly. Going through all this really feels helpless, when you're at the mercy of this oppressive bureaucracy. It makes you feel really powerless. The forest movement in Atlanta was a way that felt they could have a more tangible impact and actually be able to make more changes.

TFSR: So, Manny survived the first raid, as I understand, the one that brought initial charges of domestic terrorism on December 16, when six forest defenders were netted in a day-long raid on tree sits, a very violent one, in the South Atlanta forest. If you'd talked to Tortuguita since then, how have they expressed the experience to you?

E: I don't really know a whole lot about that. All I know is some rumors were saying that they were up in a tree smoking a spliff, blasting some bangers on their Blue-

tooth, and basically telling them to “fuck off.” I don’t know if I can really confirm that but it sounds about right.

TFSR: Okay. I would imagine the badassery aside a pretty dramatic thing. Kamau Franklin recently noted in the January 20 episode of *Democracy-Now!* that Tortugueta made past statements to the media using that name about the importance of this being a nonviolent struggle because facing the police on the terrain of violence was a tough sell. I note this not because I’m a pacifist, or because this is a pacifist project, but because law enforcement has justified their claim that they responded to being shot at and claimed that it was Manny that had fired the shots. The police have, at this time, as far as I know, not provided any proof of the allegation that Manny was responsible for shooting the officer who went into surgery. In point of fact, actually, as I understand, the cop apparently had surgery on his groin area, which may point to the cop shooting himself while drawing his service weapon. That’s the thing that happens. But that’s speculation. [police later claimed to have found a pistol, - editor]

From your impression from communications with Manuel before the incident that cost them their life, were they expecting the violent escalation by the cops raiding the encampments in this manner?

E: We all had a grasp of the potential risks. We know that they’re a violent occupying force that is willing to go to any end to crush anyone who stands up to them. So we definitely wouldn’t have put it past them to do something like this. They were also in a particularly vulnerable place as someone with immigrant status, somebody who is non-white, they were in an extra vulnerable position. So we were very concerned about them, but they were also competent and intelligent, and we always assumed that they’d be okay. I think we’ve definitely had these types of conversations before, and they had a very firm grasp of what the risks were. But they were also the most peaceful person, never starting a conflict with people. They might butt heads with people sometimes about theory and stuff like that, but they’re overall a very humble person. You could talk to them about anything. And they’re not the person to go off the handle. They’re not the thug or whatever that the media tries to portray them as.

TFSR: Switching gears, we’ve seen the memory and image of Manny many times being presented, as happens when someone dies at the crossroads of the cultural conflict, such as the defensive villain. The far right says terrible things, the media and the cops make other accusations, oftentimes similar to what the far right says, and the movement against Cop City and allies frame another image as a way of honoring, but also as a way of motivating or inspiring people to pick up where your friends struggle left off. I wonder if you had any thoughts about this that you wanted to share. What it’s

Resisting Tren Maya

In the last piece of today’s show, Frequenz-A out of Leipzig airs an interview with Pollo about the disastrous neocolonial project Tren Maya. Tren Maya is a so-called infrastructure project in the south of Mexico that causes destruction, exploitation, and suppression. Another topic in the interview was the participation of German and European companies in this project.

Frequenz-A: Hi, can you first introduce yourself, your wished name, pronoun, and your affiliation?

Pollo: My name is Pollo. I am part of the research group called Recherche-AG, an investigation group that is part of the Network of Rebellion in Germany. That’s a network that was founded during La Gira por la Vida, the Journey for Life, by the Zapatistas and Congreso Nacional Indígena (National Congress of Indigenous People in Mexico). They visited Europe and left movements and groups in Europe last year. And we found the research group researching the participation of German and European companies in their territories to do some direct actions against these companies.

Frequenz-A: Okay, and today we’re talking about multi-project Tren Maya. Can you first describe what this is about?

P: Sure. Tren Maya is an infrastructure project by the Mexican government of the current president López Obrador. The Mayan Train is a little bit difficult to describe because the name is presenting a different version of the project. It’s called Mayan Train, but it has nothing to do with the Mayas or the train. The Mayan Train is a big infrastructure project which is entering indigenous territories and big ecosystems the Selva Maya, a big rainforest in the south of Mexico. And the Mexican government presents it as a train project for tourism. So the idea of the Mexican government is to connect the big Mayan sites in the region by train to develop tourism in the area. But in reality, the Mayan Train project is bringing big companies, plants, monoculture, and destruction into this area. It is replacing the

the people inside of Lützerath. So, you can always also come there and just help in the kitchen, for instance, because cutting carrots so there's food for everyone is just as revolutionary as gluing yourself to your tree house. I think it's very important to not make a hierarchy in this. Come support us in the backup camp if you think that being in Lützerath is not the best for you.

We can also always use donations; money; eviction foods – food that doesn't go bad fast; batteries – because we don't know how long there will be electricity; power banks; battery-powered radios – I'm talking from the radio perspective. Also just nice things like chocolate – if you're sitting in the cold in the rain it's nice to have some chocolate.

Sharing messages about Lützerath on social media is very important, there are a lot of very strong pictures out there. If they reach more people, there can be a big impact. It's important to inform as many people as possible about the fight going on so that's something easy everyone can do from home.

If you want to find more information about Lützerath, we have the website Lützerathlebt.info where you find a lot of legal information, also what you should pack when you come to Lützerath and the links to all our social media channels.

One that's important is the Ticker, which is the communication chat we use for important updates about the eviction and the police. You can also find the link on the website and you can join, follow us on every social media and come by if you can.

A-Radio Berlin: For more information, go and check the web page Lützerathlebt.info. You can also listen to Radio Aalpunk.

like to see a friend being memorialized or represented in the manners that you've seen.

E: They were an anarchist, so they never wanted to be a symbol or a celebrity, or a martyr or anything like that. They were perfectly content to stay behind the scenes and do the work. It can be overwhelming and frustrating to balance all these different views. For the cops and the haters, fuck all of them, I honestly couldn't give a shit less what they think or say about any of this. As far as I'm concerned, it is completely irrelevant. They don't know shit, they can't even grasp their own reality. But the people who knew them are still in solidarity, we're all sticking together, we're all speaking out. And the truth is going to get out there, it's going to show the abuses that are perpetrated on our own civilians by cops every day. 2022 was a record-breaking year for police murders.

We're trying to preserve their memory as a human being. And they're an ordinary person that was doing some extraordinary things, and anybody can do it. And that's the real message that they would want to get across. They didn't sacrifice, they're not a Jesus or something who sacrificed themselves for other people. It's up to each and every one of us to take up our own cross and follow that example in our own way.

TFSR: Maybe without the cross part. [laughs]

E: Hopefully not. That's the thing: all these deaths and suffering are totally unnecessary. They're literally camping in the forest, they're out there sleeping, minding their own business. To be honest, even if they did roll up on them early in the morning, I could care less. That's what they get for fucking assaulting people on public lands, for traumatizing all these people, for shooting pepper balls up into trees, they're trying to kill somebody. So I don't really know what they expect. As far as I've heard, there's no weapon recovered from the site. No cam footage. Cops lie all the time. I expect them to lie. But even if they did shoot back, honestly, I wouldn't even blame them. That's what they get for trying to occupy public spaces or usurp all the common spaces, all the resources. They're taking up all the space and time and they're stealing our friends and their lives.

TFSR: We were talking really briefly before we started recording about the vigils that have been happening. We had one here in Asheville, I wasn't able to make it, but I heard it was quite nice and sad. But it's good for people to get together and mourn, for the things they're going to mourn for and the people they're going to mourn for collectively. And that's the thing that we didn't get to do in a lot of ways over 2020 and 2021 and 2022 even, with the COVID pandemic. I wonder if you could talk about what you've seen with the vigils and how far they've expanded. And how, as a member of a community that was close to Manny and that held Manny, how that feel for you.

E: It's been really amazing. Even within the first day or two, we're already seeing this whole outpouring of support. So it's obvious how many lives they've touched through all this and how many people have been affected, who maybe didn't even know about any of this stuff, or weren't directly affected by it. It wakes you up to the fact that there are people out there doing stuff every day that they can't or don't even bring it up. Anybody can form a revolutionary act in their lifetime. And Manny was one of the people that made the ultimate sacrifice for what they believed in. And that's more than can be said for the vast majority of people. So the time that they spent in the forest was probably the happiest that I remember seeing them. So it makes me feel a little bit better than whenever they left this world, they were in a position where they were all in. That was what they wanted to do. That's where they felt happy. That's where they were most at home. Even though they were an internationalist. They're a true citizen of the world. And the Weelaunee Forest became their home and will remain their home.

TFSR: You mentioned before that they are also friends with and comrades with anarchists and anti-fascist political prisoner, Dan Baker. Dan is set to be released from federal prison shortly. For folks who want an in-depth conversation about Dan's case, I'll direct them back to the other chat, not to keep you top long, but could you talk a bit about Dan, how he's doing and, in your life, the weight of militarized police response that you've seen in recent years?

E: We live in an oligarchy. For a lot of people, this is an uncomfortable truth. A lot of people maybe don't realize this, but rich people call all the shots in this country. They literally pay for campaign finance, so that politicians can get an office, they pay for lobbyists to influence policy that ordinary people never get a chance to vote on. And then they monopolize the media and twist narratives in their own favor.

On the one hand, you have a certain subset of the population that is willing to accept a bribe, to betray their friends and neighbors. On the other hand, the media will twist other people's minds and lead to all these fascist militias. There's no real media literacy, no real grasp on reality. And so between these crushing forces of the state and also para-state violence, it places all of us under threat. And I don't think a lot of people were really taking this threat seriously at the time, except for Dan, who was one of the few people who had seen similar stuff before. He's seen villages in Kurdistan besieged by ISIS, it's the same far-right religious fascism extremism that the US has supposedly been fighting against for so long.

And the exact same mentality is also propagating within the US. And so people like Dan, people like Tortugueta take it as their personal responsibility to stand up for others. And that's such a very rare and courageous thing that most people can't even comprehend or can't even really grasp what that actually takes. It appears crazy to them. Dan was one of those people who were willing to stand up for people even at great personal risk. And when many saw that example, they

ganizes itself. The police [likely] want to put fences between them and then part by part evict and then destroy the barrio. They will, of course, come with cherry pickers and try to get people out of the tree houses. The estimate is that this will take about four weeks. But of course, we will try to make it as long as possible. And preferably, we want to make it impossible, of course, to evict. If we are enough people, this might work. We have done it before. If you look at the Hambach, the forest is still there. So there's a chance that we can win if we're enough people.

A-Radio Berlin: You are part of an independent media collective in Lützerath. What's your task or role in this eviction struggle?

Radio Aalpunk: I'm part of Radio Aalpunk, which is the eviction radio team of Lützerath. Our task, or the task of independent media in general, is to show a more nuanced way of making news about Lützerath because we're on the side of the activists. When you read the big media, they often focus on little details that they think are funny, for example, when the newspapers talk about the Hambach Forest, they always talk about the fact that someone threw a bucket of shit on the cops. This is funny, of course, but I would like independent media to talk more about why we do this fight; what we fight for; why RWE is a shit company; why it is important to focus on the whole anarchist aspects of Lützerath – this whole community we have there, and not only focus on a big scandal, like someone threw a stone.

I think our task is double-edged – we want to get the information out to as many people as possible and to give relevant updates about police movements to the people in Lützerath. But also keep the people in the eviction entertained because eviction is either very boring or very stressful. You're just sitting and waiting or you're getting evicted. We want to offer people good night stories, they can request songs or podcasts, so they have nice things to listen to while they're in an emotionally difficult situation.

What I would really like to do is get the love I have for Lützerath and the love I felt inside of Lützerath to the outside world. I want to support my friends who are in the eviction and to also be able to transfer some of the beauty of Lützerath so people also understand why people feel so strongly about this and why this is such an important fight.

A-Radio Berlin: So if people would want to support Lützerath, what can they do, and where they can find more information?

Radio Aalpunk: If you want to support Lützerath, first of all, you can always come by. If you want to be in Lützerath during the eviction, we recommend coming before the 9th of January.

If being inside an eviction is, for whatever reason, too much, the Lützerath eviction is not only happening or being made possible inside Lützerath: in the village next to it, Keyenberg, a backup camp will be, and from there, we will organize support for

for an eviction? How are people planning to defend their utopian place?

Radio Aalpunk: When it comes to preparation, that's always an obvious, very visible part. Everyone who comes to Lützerath can see it. We have very beautiful barricades there, a lot of barricading has been going on. Getting the eviction[defense defenders] food, getting enough glue and glitter, getting all the material we need, which is very important. More invisible parts are also very important, for example, the whole psychological preparation. We had a lot of talks where people shared their experiences with prior evictions, so we could psychologically prepare.

But also, for example, we need a whole communication strategy for this eviction, which has also been a lot of work. And in a way, the two years of living there has also been a preparation for eviction because you live together, you care for each other, you form strong connections, or you make affinity groups, which are then the people you go defend leads with. And when it comes to how exactly we want to defend Lützerath, there's not really have one answer I can give to this. At a certain moment, we realized that having a common consensus about the action level doesn't really work. Because everyone thinks about different strategies when it comes to the defense of Lützerath, so we really want to promote this diversity of tactics.

We also want to defend by getting as many people to Lützerath. And we see at the moment already, there's a very big diversity of people in Lützerath. You can also see it in the pictures. We have pictures of people standing with a Christian cross in front of the digger and then linking arms with people in full black bloc outfits. We're welcoming different tactics. I think it's up to everyone to make their autonomous decisions in fit with their own morals to decide what they think is a good way of doing an action. We do have some camp-wide common practices. Identity refusal is something that we often see in the movements to take up police capacities, but it's not really anything you have to do, it's something that's often done and that you can get information on.

A-Radio Berlin: In the last few years, there were quite a few big evictions. I'm thinking about Hambach forest, where the police evicted the tree houses in the forest, and also La ZAD in France. What do you think is going to happen in Lützerath in the next days or weeks?

Radio Aalpunk: The timeline we have right now is that because until January 9, there is still legal protest registered in Lützerath, so people should be able to come in, and then we think on the 14th of January, the cops will probably start entering Lützerath. I have to put a disclaimer here that this is information based on data we have from the cops. So I can also not guarantee that this is 100% correct. Because, as we know, cops tend to lie. And what's gonna happen is probably the strategy we heard about is that they want to separate Lützerath in different pieces, put fences between the different barrios. A barrio is a smaller part of the occupation that or-

felt they also needed to do their part in some way. And this struggle for the forest seemed the most impactful way to do that because otherwise, they expect us to roll over and take it and submit to dehumanization and ultimate destruction. I asked myself how many of us are they going to put in the ground to build their fucking pigpen in the woods in the name of protecting the public? It doesn't make any sense. This Cop City is already being built on the blood of civilians that they're supposed to be protecting.

TFSR: I've never heard it called a pigpen. That's perfect. Do you know his release date, is there a post-release fund already out there?

E: This last week, I helped him file a Habeas [Corpus] petition, so he should be eligible for First Step Act good time off, and should be able to get up to a year off of his sentence. That was processed this past week. So with any luck, he may be getting out within the next three months, at least into a halfway house. We're really anxiously waiting to welcome Dan home. And it really kills me that he will never get a chance to meet Manny in person. I was always looking forward to that day when they would actually get to meet.

TFSR: That's tragic. Is there anything that I didn't ask about that you wanted to comment on?

E: I don't know. That's about it. Fuck them pigs, it's time. There's no going back from all this. Whenever they engage in this repression, they're sowing the seeds of insurrection, they're sowing the seeds of insurgency. If that's what happens, then they brought it on themselves, and there's nobody else that they can blame for it.

I feel like people need to be ready. And hopefully, we can still find a way around that. I don't think anybody wants to see this violence and human suffering. But it's not necessary in the first place. So that's why people have to fight back, they have to stand up for themselves. Otherwise, the state will keep taking and taking and taking until everyone's replaced. There are no more free humans in the world. They're cops and prisoners.

TFSR: Well, Eric, thanks for the ray of sunshine. [laughs]

E: I guess the silver lining is that we protect ourselves. There are so many examples from all over the world. So many people have made these tremendous sacrifices. And if we remember them and if we internalize their values and their spirit, then change is possible. And it's coming.

TFSR: I can point folks in the notes to Dan's address where they can write to him.

E: There's a dedicated PayPal. It's DanielBakerDonations@gmail.com.

TFSR: That's great. Thank you. Any way that you want people to follow your artwork, for instance?

E: People can check out my Instagram, my handle is @echosartist. There's also a @FreeDanBaker Instagram that I've been running. It's been hard to keep up with it as well as I would like, but people can reach out to me there also. Hopefully, I'll make some posts regarding the recent events on there pretty soon.

TFSR: Well, thanks a lot for sharing this time and sharing your experiences, and again, sorry for your loss.

E: Likewise, really appreciate all the work y'all are doing and getting the word out and giving a voice to people who otherwise wouldn't have one.

Resistance in Lützerath

A-Radio Berlin: 2023 arrived only a couple of days ago and we already have to deal with the first eviction of radical space in 2023. What a shitty start, or maybe a powerful one, because it's not only one squat that is being evicted but a whole village in the coal mining area in the west of Germany, close to the Dutch border. We spoke with a media activist from Radio Aalpunk who can tell us more about the fight for Lützerath.

What and where is Lützerath? And why is it being attacked by the police?

Radio Aalpunk: Lützerath is a village next to a lignite mine in Germany. It's next to the Garzweiler lignite mine in Rheinland. And maybe people still know this region from the protests that happened a few years ago against cutting the Hambach Forest which is next to another mine in the same region. It's one of the biggest lignite regions in Europe. Lützerath is a village that has been for a few years occupied

by activists to prevent the destruction of the village for the expansion of the mine.

First, it started as a civil protest because the company that owns the mine, RWE, wanted to destroy a road. And then people from the region were against this and started a vigil there. And then later people started to occupy abandoned houses and build tree houses. Lützerath is so important because it's a very strategic position. So, the government decided that they will not destroy any more villages for lignite mining, apart from Lützerath. And Lützerath is located on top of a lot of lignite. And if the village gets destroyed and the whole open area around it gets dug away, then Germany will for sure not be able to reach the climate targets that it set in Paris. The amount of brown coal, lignite, under Lützerath has more CO2 than the whole of Greece emits in the year. So it's really, really a lot of CO2. And Lützerath and this lignite must stay in the ground.

But I would say that, apart from this very clear ecological fight that we have in Lützerath, it has also become a space where people live and live politically together. It is explicitly an anarchist occupation, where people try to live together according to anarchist values. So it's also really this living-together experiment. I would say it's both this symbolic and also very concrete fight against lignite, and this very living together, trying to build our utopia, an alternative way of living place.

Now it's getting attacked because the Green Party signed an agreement with RWE about stopping burning coal earlier, but that they can destroy Lützerath to expand the mine, which is one of the typical bullshit far-in-the-future goals in the fight against climate change, which don't really help because we don't have the time to wait more years.

So Lützerath is getting attacked by the cops because they want everyone out so they can tear down the village and then get the lignite that's under the village.

A-Radio Berlin: Getting attacked by the cops says it all about what's happening now. Can you expand a bit on what happened in the last couple of days?

Radio Aalpunk: Starting from January 2, a lot of police arrived in Lützerath and they already started destroying the outer barricades of the village. At the moment, they are trying to set up the infrastructures that they need for the eviction and to be able to, in the future, cut off the village from more people coming in. So they want to build a fence around Lützerath. And what's also mostly happening is that it's a show of force, it's an intimidation tactic, because there's been some confrontation. They're in their riot gear and showing their force and already trying to discourage people by destroying stuff.

A-Radio Berlin: For a lot of people in Lützerath, it was clear that at some point, there might be a confrontation with the police that will try to evict the village. Can you tell me a bit more about how the people are prepared